

Message Text

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SUBJECT: SECRETARY PRESS CONFERENCE ON FEBRUARY 12.

FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS PERTINENT TO LATIN AMERICA FROM
THE OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF THE SECRETARY'S PRESS CONFERENCE
AT NOON, FEBRUARY 12:

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A BRIEF STATE-
MENT ON GUATEMALA.

THIS IS MY FIRST OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS PUBLICLY OUR
GOVERNMENT'S AND MY PERSONAL SYMPATHY FOR THE PEOPLE OF
GUATEMALA IN THE UNPARALLELED TRAGEDY WHICH HAS BEFALLEN
THEM AND THEIR COUNTRY.

AMERICANS HAVE ALWAYS TRADITIONALLY RESPONDED GENEROUSLY
IN THOUGHT AND DEED TO THE NEEDS OF THE SUFFERING. REFLEC-
TING THAT HUMANITARIAN SPIRIT, OUR GOVERNMENT, JOINED BY
ITS CITIZENS AND CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS, IS MOUNTING A
MAJOR EFFORT TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE OF
GUATEMALA TO EASE THE SUFFERING CAUSED BY THE EARTHQUAKE.

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I WILL VISIT GUATEMALA ON FEBRUARY 24 IN CONNECTION WITH

MY LATIN AMERICAN TRIP.

Q: WELL, IF YOU HAD YOUR "DRUTHERS", WHAT WOULD YOU DO VIS-A-VIS CUBA?

A: SECRETARY KISSINGER: WE STATED OUR PREFERENCES IN DECEMBER, WHEN THE SITUATION IN OUR JUDGMENT WAS MANAGE-ABLE AND NEGOTIABLE. IT DID NOT GET OUT OF HAND UNTIL OUR DOMESTIC DIVISIONS DEPRIVED US OF DIPLOMATIC LEVERAGE.

WHAT WE WILL DO IN THE FUTURE IS NOT FOR ME TO SAY RIGHT NOW, EXCEPT THAT WE CANNOT LEAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT WE WILL BE INDIFFERENT TO A CONTINUATION OF THESE EFFORTS. AND IF WE CONTINUE TO SPEAK ABOUT ANGOLA IT IS NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE ANY ILLUSIONS ABOUT WHAT IS GOING ON IN ANGOLA, BUT BECAUSE WE WANT OTHER COUNTRIES TO UNDERSTAND, THAT AT LEAST THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH UNDERSTANDS WHAT THE PROBLEM IS AND THAT IT WILL EXERCISE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES IN A DEMOCRACY TO TRY TO BRING HOME TO THE PUBLIC AND TO THE CONGRESS WHAT OUR FUTURE OBLIGATIONS MAY BE.

Q: MR. SECRETARY, MAY I ASK A QUESTION? IT IS INDICATIVE OF THE GENERAL INTEREST THAT UNTIL NOW NO QUESTION HAS BEEN ASKED ABOUT LATIN AMERICA. WHY ARE YOU GOING TO LATIN AMERICA? AND IN CONNECTION WITH THE PREVIOUS DISCUSSION ON ANGOLA AND THE ROLE OF CUBAN TROOPS, ARE YOU GOING TO TAKE THIS UP AND POSSIBLY PROPOSE PUTTING CUBA BACK INTO THE HEMISPHERIC DIPLOMATIC DOGHOUSE?

A: SECRETARY KISSINGER: THE TRIP TO LATIN AMERICA HAS BEEN PLANNED FOR A LONG TIME, AND IT HAD TO BE POSTPONED ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS BECAUSE OVERWHELMING OTHER EVENT OCCURRED. IT IS DESIGNED TO DISCUSS PRIMARILY HEMISPHERIC PROBLEMS: THE RELATIONSHIP OF LATIN AMERICA TO THE UNITED STATES; THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE IN WHICH WE ARE FACING THE PROBLEMS OF THE TRADITIONAL HEMISPHERIC PATTERN IN A WORLD OF INTERDEPENDENCE; IN WHICH THE REGIONAL CONCERNS OF SOME OF THE COUNTRIES ARE NOW COMPETING WITH THE INTERESTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD IN GENERAL; AND IN WHICH IN LATIN
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AMERICA WE DEAL WITH COUNTRIES OF SIMILAR BACKGROUNDS, SIMILAR HISTORIES, BUT A DIFFERENT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

SO THAT HOW WE MANAGE THIS RELATIONSHIP IS OF VERY GREAT IMPORTANCE.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ANGOLA MAY OR MAY NOT COME UP. IT IS NOT THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF MY TRIP. I AM NOT TRAVELLING

THROUGH LATIN AMERICA IN ORDER TO LINE UP LATIN AMERICANS
ON THE CUBAN PROBLEM.

IT IS CLEAR THAT THE EVOLUTION TOWARDS NORMALIZATION OF
RELATIONS WITH CUBA, WHICH HAD STARTED LAST YEAR AND WITH
WHICH WE HAD BEEN PREPARED TO COOPERATE, HAS BEEN INTER-
RUPTED.

BUT WE ARE NOT GOING TO LATIN AMERICA ON A CRUSADE AGAINST
CUBA. KISSINGER

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